1:Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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many small streams) and it is generally supposed that they are the sites of ancient cultivation; there are comparatively few streams in this country though swamps and small water holes containing stagnant water are common[1]. 133

Northward in Tamankaduwa (a division of the North Central Province) the great trees give place to poorer growth and a scrubby jungle is found. On the east of the Badulla-Batticaloa road lie the Nilgala hills, the best of the Vedda domain and the most pleasing country in Ceylon. Here, broad valleys lie between jungle-clad ranges of much weathered gneiss, among whose rocky crags and rounded domes, *bambara*, the rock bee (*Apis indica*), builds its combs. Here is no gloomy jungle, but in the valleys are many thickets and small trees growing scattered as in a young orchard, their trunks protected by coarse lalang grass which often attains 5 or 6 feet in 133 137

[1] The character of the Bintenne of the Eastern Province has been well stated by Mr H. Freeman, Government Agent for the Eastern Province, in his Administration Report for 1908, for the following extract from which I am indebted to Mr John Ferguson: "This is an unsatisfactory region; a wretched population of about 3,000 in the largest pattu of the Province has, with the exception of three or four small patches of paddy land, nothing to live on except chenas and jungle produce; they have not the advantage of the hundreds along the coast who can get a sort of living by begging from their neighbours. Necessarily the Bintenna folk are miserable in appearance; nearly all of them are sick. There are many abandoned tanks, but the people have neither the physique nor the will to restore them. There are no coconuts to speak of in Bintenna; the few trees are either infertile or barren. Still we must take the people and the country as we find them, and rather than let the population drift away from Bintenna to the chena country of Uva, I would concentrate them on the more fertile spots about Kallodai, Maha-oya, Pullumalai and Tempitiya, on or near the Badulla road, and endeavour to teach them to do tank work; there are promising, abandoned, tanks, which could be restored, and the land settled on the people on easy terms. Plentiful chenas would be necessary to fill the stomachs of the people to get work out of them; maize grows well in Bintenna; it is now imported in large quantities from Uva; large tracts of Bintenna could be turned into maize fields for the supply of the people on the coast also, while Uva could then keep to itself its supplies of this commodity sent down to this district....In addition to the Sinhalese population of Bintenna there are the Veddas,...and bands of gipsies find a good hunting ground there. Some of these have just been prosecuted and imprisoned for violating the Game Laws, and also made to pay road tax, payment of which they have evaded for years; the gipsies have considerable wealth in cattle and other property; they also drink and steal. Since writing the above on the condition of Bintenna I have explored other and remoter parts of that division, and find that whatever prosperity in paddy cultivation it enjoyed in the distant past must have been due to the Rajakariya system, in the absence of which Bintenna will probably remain a wilderness for an indefinitely long period."

1;Seligmann & Seligmann E-5 (1907-1908) 1911
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133 height. Clear rock-strewn streams abound, their banks
137 brightened by the deep green leaves and the bright red flowers of the *rattawal* (*Ixora coccinea*). Scattered masses of rock often of great size form convenient shelters for the Veddas, and assist the rapid drainage of the country, which does not become water-logged even during torrential rains. This beautiful country is rich in game. To the east, where many Veddas have drifted, the jungle is thicker, the land lies lower, and is generally less healthy. The Nuwaragala Hills to the north of the Nilgala ranges are perhaps the wildest part of the island and are more densely clothed in jungle, but there are plenty of streams, while the slope of the country permits of ready drainage.

The coastal zone north of Batticaloa inhabited by the coast Veddas is flat and sandy, and the vegetation though dense is often less tall and less abundant than in other parts of the country. Salt water marshes are common, and the country is cut into by numerous lagoons and creeks, often bounded by a fringe of mangroves which stretches some distance up the mouths of the rivers. Although this area may now, and
131 for yet a few years, be rightly called the Vedda country it must
161 not be thought that any considerable number of its inhabitants
563 are Veddas, or that they exercise any territorial or political influence; on the contrary, they constitute an insignificant fraction of the Tamil and Sinhalese inhabitants before whom they are rapidly disappearing, partly by intermarriage and absorption, partly owing to misery and a high death rate brought about by sheer inability to cope with the new state of affairs that the increased settlement of this, the wildest part of the island, has brought about.

Formerly the Vedda country is known to have embraced
131 the whole of the Uva, and much of the Central and North
175 Central Provinces, while there is no reason to suppose that their territory did not extend beyond these limits. Indeed there is no reasonable doubt that the Veddas are identical with the "Yakkas" of the Mahavansa and other native chronicles.

175 The seventh chapter of the Mahawansa relates the arrival in Ceylon, B.C. 543, of Vijaya who married Kuweni an aboriginal princess (*Yakkini*) and by her assistance destroyed a great

2:Bailey G-5 (ca. 1854) 1863
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calca and Badulla. The largest Veddah population is in the former district, and these are they of whom Tennent principally writes, but they are by no means the wildest specimens of the race. They have not maintained so complete an isolation from other races as those I am about to describe, and consequently are not worthy of the same attention.*

It is the "Wilder Sort" of Veddahs, as Knox calls them, of whom I desire to place on record an accurate description, before they quite pass away and are forgotten.

They roam about through the park-like district of Nilgala, which presents, of its kind, perhaps the loveliest scenery in this beautiful island, and wander among the forests of Bintenne—that "Land of Bintan all covered with mighty woods and filled with abundance of deer", where Knox tells us these dreaded "Wild Men" dwelt.

It would be difficult to conceive more barbarous types of the human race than they present. Yet there are degrees even in *their* barbarism, for those of Nilgala are wilder than their brethren of Bintenne. They are fewer in number, and more diminutive in stature. They are distributed through their lovely country in small septs, or families, occupying generally caves in the rocks, though some have little bark huts. They depend almost solely on hunting for their support,† and hold little communication even with each other.

Few in number as they are,—they did not exceed seventy-two persons in 1858,—still no other human beings are to be found for many miles round their habitations, and this seclusion has caused them to retain peculiarities which are fast disappearing, or have already disappeared from among even the wildest of Bintenne.‡

There, there are both wild and settled Veddahs. Of the latter

* See Tennent's remarks on the late Mr. Atherton's praiseworthy and successful labours in civilizing the Veddahs of the Batticaloa district, where there are now only some two hundred and fifty who, having resisted all his efforts to improve them, still live in caves near the rock called Gunner's Quoin, and in Palla Palata of the Batticaloa Bintenna. I have been in communication with Mr. Birch, the present agent for government in that district, and, from specimens of their *patois* which he sent me, and which greatly resembles the Singhalese usually spoken, in those very words in which, in the Badulla district, the Veddah dialect differs from it, I am justified in describing them as having had, in some period of their history, more intercourse with the Singhalese than those of whom I am writing.

† Solely till 1855, when I succeeded in inducing them to turn their attention to cultivation; but they much prefer their own wild life, and their cultivation is very limited.

‡ In using the term Bintenne, I refer to that portion of the division of Bintenne which belongs to the Badulla district. A larger portion of the same division is in Batticaloa.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
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133 while the Wila-oya and Kulapan-oya convey the waters from the eastern limits of the Buttala-Wedirata to the sea through the Panawa Pattu.

The chief mountains are Wadinagala (2,414 ft.), "Westminster Abbey" (1,830 ft.), Degalhella, Nilgala, Hibitalanagala, Kiripokunagala, "Chimney Hill," and Obbekota in the Monaragala range.

Most of these mountains rise abruptly from the plains below, and terminate in high masses of rock. There are, in some cases—particularly on the summit of "Westminster Abbey"—small patches of vegetation, but in the majority the summits of the more conspicuous hills are bare. The country described, therefore, may, broadly speaking, be considered as flat, broken by a few low undulations, the whole being dotted over irregularly with abrupt mountainous masses of rock.

132 The rainfall of this area is comparatively low, and probably does not exceed an average of 60 inches for the year, nearly the whole of which falls in the north-east monsoon, thus involving a period of extreme drought during the south-west monsoon, when for months there is not a drop of rain, followed by torrential showers of variable intensity and uneven distribution.

I am indebted to Mr. Balfour, the Director of Irrigation, for the details of rainfall at Ampari and Rotawewa,* well outside the area I refer to, and to the Surveyor-General† for the same particulars at Monaragala, these being given in tabular form in the Appendix.

● 137 As might be anticipated from such variation and extreme, it would follow that the vegetation of the country embraced must be, for the most part, what is called dry-zone flora, but other influences have to be considered in relation to distribution. These may be considered as being affected—

(*a*) By influence of streams rising in high altitudes, or in moister regions;
(*b*) By the operations of human beings;
(*c*) By animal transport of seed;
(*d*) By wind action.

* Appendix A. † Appendix B.

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
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commodities which would produce both directly and indirectly its effect upon local plant life, either by the introduction of species of economic value, or by the direct export of woods found at hand.

In support of this it is noticeable that to the north-west of Pottuvil, Palu (*Mimusops luxandra*) and Satinwood (*Chloroxylon swietenia*) are comparatively abundant, as contrasted with the scarcity of the same species on the banks of the Kumbukkan river. Again, while Mi (*Bassia longifolia*) is abundant on the Kumbukkan, it may be called rare west of Pottuvil. As this last-named is an introduction of great value, it was spared where it existed near towns, but was neglected in those localities where the population had no permanent settlement, as we find is the case with the majority of the Maha Wedirata "villages" of the present day, and it is only in some places of old establishment that we find the Mi tree now.

The present population is very much scattered, its distribution being undoubtedly governed by the presence or absence of water; hence it will be found that the so-called villages are at considerable distances apart, and only where a supply of water can be got, however small or impure, all the year round. On the other hand, one finds the example of an unpopulated area bounded by a perennial stream, as in the case of the valley of the Kumbukkan river for the last thirty miles of its course. Here, however, we have the instance of a stream that rises to an enormous flood that inundates the country to a depth of many feet on both its banks, thus drowning out, in the wet season, any annual cultivation, and leaving the place parched and dry during the periods of drought—two factors sufficient to keep back a people unprepared to establish strong measures to secure permanent occupation.

Nor is this all. The Kumbukkan river, after it passes the foot of the isolated mass of the Monaragala hills, enters a country that afforded the Veddas their best hunting ground, and the Veddas appear in their early history to have been a race of people who depended almost entirely on the chase, using for their dwellings the rudest shelters of caves and temporary branch huts. They had no inducement to build

4: Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
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753 not be drunk. Again, in case of fever a decoction would be
757 given of a number of vegetable productions that were *believed* to be cooling. I may here mention that when questioned as to the exact effect any one of these ingredients would specifically bring about, I could get no clear answer. I found that
[278] both *Cassia auriculata* and *Evolvulus alsinoides* were regarded as most beneficial in fever, but I failed to find an answer as to their direct action. Equally *Musaronia pumila* would be considered as a most valuable medicine for fits, as well as fevers.

[755] Charms and incantations appear to be more important than medicines with the people.

I found that castor oil was appreciated and its action understood, but it is curious to note that it is supposed to be effective by outward application, as well as inward. Generally speaking, I found that the local knowledge of our plants was very wide, and it would be difficult to find a plant of any use that the people could not correctly name.

137 In some cases where a plant was rare, I found that no name
824 could be given to it; as, for instance, I obtained a few examples of *Centranthera procumbens*, but the people had no acquaintance with its name whatever. Nor did I find names invented in order to afford answers to my questions: it was a case of giving the right answer, or expressing ignorance.

273 I might mention incidentally, that though our familiar Kitul (*Caryota urens*) is well known, I found the people equally unacquainted with toddy or jaggery, except as *purchaseable* commodities, just as much as kerosine oil is. This ignorance of a source of alcohol may have much to do
674 with the striking absence of crime in the country I refer to, and I mention it in passing, as worthy of consideration. On the other hand, I would again point out that owing to the rigidity of certain customs there is not the same scope for jealousy over women that plays such an important factor in crimes of violence in other parts of this Island. Again, it
361 should not be lost sight of that in the Vedda country small
674 groups of people congregate round centres where water, however limited in quantity and impure in quality, is to be found, and are therefore much more mutually dependent

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
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136 quite close to me. Presently one of them lit on my wrist, and began sipping the moisture as it came from my skin. The second insect quickly followed exactly the same procedure on my slowly extending my arm.

At a small puddle, measuring about 2 ft. by 18 in., I found the whole of the damp ground covered with wasps sipping the moisture.

Some idea of the dryness of the locality can be judged from these instances, and I submit that animal distribution must be affected thereby.

137 The distribution of plants, not of direct value to man, moreover shows certain erratic conditions. The most striking instance of this is in the distribution of the Dipterocarps. At Monaragala, and a little to the eastward, our common Hora (*Dipterocarpus zeylanicus*) is moderately plentiful. From Liyangalla onwards towards the east it is absent, but to the north-east of Siyambala-anduwa, near the village of Newgalla, one finds fringes of *Vatica obscura* on the banks of the dry streams; in other words, there is an enormous belt of country the opposite sides of which have representations of this important order of trees, with no examples in the intermediate area.

On the other hand I found no examples of *Vatica obscura* to the south of Siyambala-anduwa on any of the streams I crossed.

Of the Dilleniaceæ, I found *Dillenia indica* on the higher reaches of the Heda-oya, and a few individual examples—probably introduced—towards Waragoda in the north and at Kumuna in the south-east.

Of the Anonaceæ, the usual dry-zone *Polyalthias* are very abundant. Both *Anamirta paniculata* and *Tinospora cordifolia* are abundant representations of the Menispermaceæ.

In the tanks where there was water, both *Nymphæa lotus* and *Nelumbium speciosum* are common Lotuses. Both roots [222] and bulbs of these plants are eaten.

In some of the chenas I found *Brassica juncea* grown with the other crops, but I could get no definite explanation why it was cultivated.

Of the Capparideæ, the typical *Capparis zeylanica* is plentiful. [262] Its fruits are eaten by the Veddas as well as the Tamils. I

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found that towards the coast *Crataeva roxburghii* occurs, but it is by no means plentiful, as in the Hambantota country. 137

Of the Bixaceæ, I found a few examples of *Cochlospermum gossypium*, but clearly these were introductions connected with Buddhistic places of worship. It may be safely assumed that where an "escape" of this species is found, one may look for temple "remains," and the same may be said of Ironwood, *Hibiscus ficulneus*, or *Balsamodendrum caudatum*.

Scolopia gærtneri is a wild and plentiful representation of this order, and abundant round "Westminster Abbey" and Degalhela. *Hydnocarpus venenata* occurs in abundance by stream sides, and is probably more plentiful than *H. alpina*, which is confined to the dry low-country, notwithstanding its inappropriate specific name.

Passing over unimportant orders to the Guttiferæ the following claim notice: *Garcinia spicata* is very common and widely distributed; *Calophyllum burmanni* is occasional; *C. tomentosum* occurs at "Westminster Abbey" and near Degalhela; *C. inophyllum* is practically confined to the coast, though not entirely so, while a further example of this genus (the identity of which has yet to be determined) I have referred to already in an earlier Paper, published in the Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, as being a probable foreigner.

Ironwood—*Mesua ferrea*—occurs in quite a forest form round the base of Himitillanegala, where, I suspect, it was introduced. It occurs at all the old temples, but is otherwise scarce.

Of the Malvaceæ, *Sidas* and *Abutilons* are exceedingly common. *Urenas*, on the other hand, are to be looked for in damp waste places, where they attain to considerable size. *Thespesia populnea* is an introduction, and not particularly common. *Hibiscus tiliaceus* occurs near backwaters, but it is not generally plentiful. *Bombax malabaricum* occurs in the form of immense individuals, but it is certainly not plentiful; while *Eriodendron anfractuosum*, on the other hand, is a plentifully introduced garden plant.

Among the Sterculias prominence should be given to *S. fœtida*, well known to the Tamils as the Katu-tengai or forest cocoanut, *S. colorata*, and *S. thwaitesii*. I obtained a

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137 few solitary examples of *S. urens*, but I feel confident that this last is an introduction. *Pterospermum suberifolium*—the Welanga of the Sinhalese—is very abundant.

824 372 411 The young straight shoots of this plant supplied the Vedda arrow, while the wood was employed by them for the manufacture of "fire drills."

The distribution of *Helicteres isora* is curiously restricted to what might be turned "patches," the largest of which I found at Etmole. *Heritiera littoralis*—the Chomanturai of the Tamils—is scarce, but occurs near Panawa and Pottuvil.

Of the Tiliaceæ, I noticed that the distribution of Halmilla (*Berrya ammonilla*) was not very general, while its abundance or scarcity appeared to be a matter of its easy access or the reverse. This is to be expected of so valuable a timber tree.

"*Vidpani*" (Tamil) (*Pityranthe verrucosa*), so plentiful in the Trincomalee District, is comparatively scarce in the Vedda country. Of the Grewias, *G. tiliæfolia*, *G. microcos*, and *G. polygama* are the commonest, but the first of these is not so abundant here as in the dry zone of the Ratnapura District.

As representing the Linaceæ, *Erythroxylon monogynum* may be taken as an abundant typical example. It is alleged in the Panawa Pattu that meat hung in the smoke from burning wood of this plant, if eaten produces a purgative action.

Both *Hiptage madablota* and *H. parvifolia* of the Malpighiaceæ occur in the Vedda country, but in no abundance.

The bright, but pestiferous, *Tribulus terrestris*, is to be found near Pottuvil and at Panawa, in places where the soil is not too dry, but its distribution does not spread far inland.

Of the Geraniaceæ I found very few examples. In some slightly moist spots, west of "Westminster Abbey," I observed *Biophytum sensitivum*, and in some of the tanks I got *Hydrocera triflora*, but in other respects, except the introduced *Averrhoa bilimbi* and *A. carambola*—common in gardens—this order is poorly represented. The Rutaceæ is not well represented in *wild* species, if we except the well-known *Feronia elephantum*, *Murraya kœnigii*, and *Toddalia aculeata*. In the gardens oranges, lime, and pummalo have been introduced, but with no marked success either in the matter of quality or quantity

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of fruit, an insipid fibrous product being the usual type of Vedda-country orange. 137 ●

In dry rocky ground *Ochna wightiana* is to be found in some abundance, as exemplifying the small order of the Ochnaceæ.

Of the Burseraceæ, I have already pointed out that *Balsamodendrum cordatum* may be taken as indicating some place of veneration. I found in many cases where there were ruins, or abandoned monastic caves, this plant would be sure to occur. [172] On the summit of "Westminster Abbey" it is comparatively abundant, as also at Nuwaragala—another ancient fort. Doubtless the fragrant smell of the wood led to its use as an incense, and, thus, to its cultivation. *Canarium zeylanicum* occurs very sparingly west of Bowela, and *Filicium decipiens* may be found in the forest valleys, though it does not attain any striking proportions.

The Meliaceæ is very well represented. The Margosa, however, as typical of this order, is an introduction, and where it is found under semi-wild conditions the inference is that that particular spot was once inhabited. This beautiful tree, however, is afflicted with a disease that kills back the young twigs, and I remarked that this sickness is very widespread. *Melia dubia*, often called Wal-kohomba, occurs in the western part of the Vedda country, but in no great abundance. *Walsura piscidia* and *Dysoxylum binectariferum* are both common, while the famous Satinwood is, of course, very fairly abundant, except in what might be called wet forest. The abundance of Satinwood has, as I have hinted, doubtless from very early times been influenced by human operations, as the value and quality of this excellent wood is widely known. That being so, its spread has been materially governed, with the result that in a great deal of the country where it once must have been plentiful there are now only isolated examples.

Munronia pumila occurs in tolerable abundance round Bowela, Waragama, and Danakiria. It is medicinal.

Of Celastraceous plants, *Elæodendron glaucum* is very common near the coast, and attains a large size. A *Kurrimia*, probably a variety of *K. zeylanica*, is found occasionally in the northern half of the country I explored, but does not appear to attract native attention.

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137 It is almost superfluous to remark that the Rhamnaceæ are abundantly represented by various forms of *Zizyphus*, both as an abominable thorny climbing bush, or in the more elegant *Z. jujuba*. *Scutia indica* is plentiful near damp spots, while *Ventilago maderaspatana* is most abundant.

Vitis quadrangularis is, perhaps, the most common example of the Ampelideæ, while *Leea sambucina* is specially noticeable in the vicinity of large streams.

The Sapindaceæ afford plentiful examples in *Allophylus cobbe*, *Sapindus emarginatus*, or soap-nut, *Nephelium longana* (*Mora*, Sinhalese), *Schleichera trijuga* (*Kon*, Sinhalese), and *Glenica zeylanica*, all of which are about equally distributed.

[804 278] In waste ground the creeping *Cardiospermum halicacabum* is plentiful; its use as a tonic appears to have been known to the Veddas.

I also observed *Dodonæa viscosa* in a few isolated places, particularly near Wattegama, but to my surprise its use as an embrocation was apparently unknown.

Of the Anacardiaceæ, if we except cultivated species, few occur. The wild mango (*Mangifera zeylanica*) is to be found near or in the Heda-oya valley, but not in great profusion. *Odina wodier* is to some extent cultivated, as it is frequently to be found preserved where there are fields. *Nothopegia colebrookiana* is seemingly unknown to the people, though I found it frequently. *Spondias mangifera* I believe to have been introduced.

Passing to the Calycifloræ, the small order of Connaraceæ finds as its best representative the widely distributed *Connarus monocarpus*, that appears to thrive equally well in the wet and dry zones. I found it in abundance in some of the driest situations. It is said to be of use for buffalo ropes. [824]

Of the Leguminosæ, space considerations oblige me to make but the briefest reference to the better known examples in a list form :—

Crotalaria retusa. In open waste places.
C. striata. Occasional, in dry fields.
Indigofera pauciflora. In abandoned fields.
I. hirsuta. In waste places and road sides.
Æschynomene aspera. In damp places or puddles.

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137 ●

Abrus precatorius. Very common in scrub jungle.
Mucuna (?) pruriens. Moderately common (in fruit).
Erythrina indica. In gardens—occasional.
E. ovalifolia. Near streams and tanks—uncommon.
Butea frondosa. In the park country near Etmole.
Clitoria ternatea. Common; not seen in forest.
Flemingia strobilifera. Near streams and cool spots.
Pterocarpus marsupium. In park country—common.
Pongamia glabra. Common near water.
Dalbergia lanceolaria. Moderately common; of large size.
Derris scandens. Common all over the country.
Cæsalpinia bonduk. Occasional; possibly introduced.
Cassia fistula. Moderately common.
C. marginata. Common, even close to the sea.
C. auriculata. Commoner near the coast than inland.
Dialium ovoideum. Common on the summit of "Westminster Abbey."
Saraca indica. Occasional in damp forests.
Tamarindus indica. In gardens, abandoned or otherwise. An introduction.
Bauhinia tomentosa. Plentiful.
Entada scandens. Generally near streams.
Dichrostachys cinerea. Moderately common in bush land.
Mimosa pudica. Occasional.
A. leucophlœa. Comparatively rare.
A. eburnea. Common near the coast.
A. caesia. Very common, especially near damp forests.
A. pennata. Less common, generally locally plentiful.
Albizzia odoratissima. Moderately abundant in the west.
A. stipulata. Occasional.
Pithecolobium geminatum. Locally abundant.

Of the Rosaceæ, I noticed a Pygeum near Bowela, in a valley, but procured no examples for identification. On the banks of the Heda-oya I also secured another, probably an escape from higher altitudes.

Bryophyllum calycinum, as representing the Crassulaceæ, is probably an introduction. It infests places where the soil is not deep, as, for example, near slab rocks, but generally in these cases near habitations or places once inhabited.

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●137 Of the Droseraceæ, *Drosera burmanni* is to be found on the edges of tanks where the soil is damp, and again I have found it on thin soil on rocks. This plant appears to be equally at home at all altitudes in Ceylon, both in the wet as well as the dry zone. I failed to find it near the sea, though it occurs at no great distance inland.

The Rhizophoraceæ are well represented by Mangroves that occur in tidal estuaries. Of these, *Rhizophora mucronata* is by far the most common. *M. candaria*, with its large leaves, is also often found along with the last, and with *Bruguiera gymnorhiza*. I also observed a *Ceriops*, but not in flower. In a valley south of "Westminster Abbey" I saw *Anisophyllea zeylanica*, but this plant appears to belong to a higher altitude. *Carallia integerrima* is to be met with in the Kumbukkan valley.

The Combretaceæ afford magnificent examples of Kumbuk (*Terminalia glabra*), that are to be found on the banks of all the streams in the Vedda country. The "Aralu" (*Terminalia chebula*) is also common in the "park country" near Etmole, while its close ally, *T. belerica*, is frequently to be met with right through the Maha Wedirata. Again, in the "park country" *Anogeissus latifolia* is fairly common. *Combretum ovalifolium* occurs in rocky places in some abundance. The gaunt *Gyrocarpus jacquini* is very common; it forms a characteristic tree in this dry locality.

Of the Myrtaceæ, I found the most abundant examples in *Eugenia jambolana*, that occur in tank beds, while *E. bracteata* occurs in all the dry forests. By the sides of backwaters, or where the soil is damp, *E. corymbosa* forms a common bush.

I noticed a few examples of our common Guava (*Psidium guajava*) in some of the old gardens, but nobody could tell me how it came to be introduced. *Barringtonia acutangula* is moderately common in and about tanks, where it attains a considerable size. On the banks of the larger streams I obtained *B. racemosa*, but it is not plentiful. *Careya arborea*, however, is moderately common in the northern part of the country I am treating of.

Of Melastomaceous plants, I found very stunted forms of *Osbeckia* (?) *aspera* growing in most impossible places. Near

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Bowels I found, in a damp valley, a *Sonerila* growing in a rocky crevice. *Memecylon umbellatum*, *M. grande*, and *M. capitellatum* are all very common in the forest areas. 137

Of the Lythraceæ, I found *Lagerstræmia flos-reginæ* not uncommon on the banks of the larger streams, where it frequently occurs as a large tree. *Lawsonia alba* is cultivated at Panawa. In the "park country" I found a few examples of *Woodfordia floribunda*, but this is far more common near Passara and Bandarawela.

The poisonous *Modecca palmata* is often to be met with, but is not common. I was surprised to notice that it was little known to the people. *Passiflora fœtida*, however, appears to be well known, though its distribution is probably more restricted. The Papaw has been introduced here, and is to be found in some of the gardens, but sparingly.

Of the Cucurbitaceæ, I found *Trichosanthes integrifolia* to be fairly common, its brilliant red billiard-ball-like fruits being very conspicuous. I suspect that it is eaten by monkeys, as I frequently found fragments of the fruit. *Cephalandra indica* is often to be seen in dampish forests. In all the chenas Cucumbers of sorts are grown, and appear to find a considerable market demand. [241]

Possibly these may have originated in the well-known cucumber, but owing to degeneration and environment have changed their form, for certainly the average shape of Vedda-country "Kekiri" is more round in outline than ovate. The "rind" is remarkably bitter to the taste.

Of the Begoniæ, I found a few examples of what I take to be *B. malabarica* not far from the base of Westminster Abbey, but it may have been an "escape."

Our monotypic *Tetrameles undiflora* occurs but sparingly in the north of the Maha Wedirata, while the individual trees are immense.

Of the Cactaceæ, *Opuntia* (*?*) *dillenii* is frequently to be met with, both in a semi-wild state and in hedges. I found it growing in profusion at Okanda, and all down the coast where there were, or had been, gardens. I am unable to say if the Veddas know it, though the name Katu-patuk is well known. I am inclined to suppose that it was spread by the Tamils.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 Considerations of space oblige me to avoid more than a passing reference to the larger Gamopetalous plants, hence my having unnoticed several of botanical interest. I therefore select of the Rubiaceæ the following :—

Sarcocephalus cordatus. Moderately common in beds of tanks and by river sides.

Anthocephalus cadamba. Rather rare, but occurs towards Muppane.

Adina cordifolia. Locally plentiful.

Stephegyne parviflora. Rather common, and valued for its timber.

Wendlandia notoniana. Occasional, towards the Monaragala hills.

Mussenda frondosa. Not uncommon near streams.

Gardenia latifolia. Plentiful in rocky ground.

Canthium didymum. Common, especially near rocks.

Ixora parviflora. Common.

Morinda tinctoria. Common, especially near the coast, and often found in gardens.

Webera corymbosa. Exceedingly common.

Of the Compositæ :—

Vernonia cinerea. Exceedingly common.

Elephantopus scaber. Plentiful in the whole country, but avoids deep shade.

Ageratum conyzoides. Everywhere an abundant introduction.

Sphæranthus indicus. Common in fields.

Bidens ? Not uncommon near abandoned villages, and occasionally on river banks.

Of the Goodenoviaceæ, I found *Scævola lobelia* common at Okanda on the sea coast, the only place I have found it in Ceylon.

Of the Plumbaginaceæ, our only Plumbago is occasionally found in most unexpected places, but nowhere in abundance.

Of the Myrsinaceæ, I found an *Ardisia* in many of the forests near rivers, but I am uncertain of its identity. The leaves are large and grow in verticils.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Of the Sapotaceæ, by far the most important is the Palu (*Mimusops hexandra*), but its distribution is erratic. It is plentiful between Lahugala and Pottuvil, but the individual trees are not large. Towards the Heda-oya, and in the arid country west of Panawa, it also occurs plentifully, but towards the Kumbukkan valley it again ceases to be abundant. This erratic distribution in a country that favours the growth of Palu is probably, as suggested earlier in this Paper, the outcome of early trade in this valuable timber. [137]

Munamal (*Mimusops elengi*) occurs very frequently, but does not become very large. *Bassia longifolia* I have already referred to. It is very plentiful up the Kumbukkan river, the trees there attaining an enormous size; elsewhere it is practically rare.

Of the Ebenaceæ, perhaps the most common is *Diospyros embryopteris*, that occurs where there is moisture near at hand. The Veddas eat its fruit. [262]

D. ebenum, like "Palu," appears to have been largely exploited, with the result that it is only in remote spots that it is to be found in any abundance. *D. ovalifolia* occasional, growing in patches.

Both *Salvadora persica* and *Azima titracantha* are abundant, the former being common near the coast, but neither in real forests.

Of the Apocynaceæ, the most distressingly common is undoubtedly *Carissa spinarum*, that occurs always where treed forest has been cleared. *Cerbera odollam* is fairly plentiful in the Panawa Pattu, and is regarded as useful for fencing fields.

Plumeria acutifolia is always associated with temples, abandoned or otherwise, but I failed to obtain any information regarding its introduction.

Alstonia scholaris is not uncommon, and attains enormous proportions.

Tabernæmontana dichotoma is also to be found sparingly, but generally in damp spots.

Of Asclepiads, *Hemidesmus indicus* is very plentiful in waste land.

Calotropis gigantea is very abundant, especially near the sea.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 *Sarcostemma brunonianum* occurs frequently, especially in the bush country.

Dregea volubilis is also fairly abundant near to Liyangolla and Muppane.

Of the Loganiaceæ, the well known *Strychnos nux-vomica* is most abundant. It is remarkable, in view of its being so common, that cases of children poisoning themselves by eating the seed are rarely heard of.

S. potatorum occurs, but is not abundant. I looked out for cases where the seeds were used for precipitating muddy water, but failed to find an instance of its use in this direction.

Of the Gentianaceæ, *Exacum zeylanicum* occurs in fields, but the flowers are much paler than in wet-country examples.

Of the Boragineæ, *Cordia myxa* is fairly common. *Tournefortia argentea* occurs on the seashore, but is not plentiful. *Heliotropium indicum* is very common in waste ground.

Of the Solanaceæ, mention need only be made of *Datura fastuosa*, which appears in nearly all the more established gardens. The various "Battus" I can pass over, as being common all over the Ceylon low-country, and as probably introduced.

Of the Scrophulariaceæ I desire to draw attention to only one, *Centranthera procumbens*, owing to its presence in a dry country being remarkable. I found it on two occasions only, first between Nangalla and Danakiriya, and the second time about five miles south of Liyangolla. On both these occasions I asked the villagers if they could name it, but without success. Its presence is singular, as it is generally to be found only in the wet zone, or in a country where extremes of drought are not experienced.

Of the Bignoniaceæ, *Oroxylum indicum* is moderately common, but I think there is little doubt that it was introduced for the sake of its medicinal value. *Dolichandrone rheedii* occurs near the coast, near standing water. *Stereospermum chelonioides* is fairly common. Its wood was used by the Veddas for bows.

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Of the Pedaliaceæ, *Pedalium murex* is common near the coast, and is used by both the Sinhalese and Tamils for a demulcent. *Martynia diandra* occurs on the fringes of villages

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

in waste ground, as if introduced. *Sesamum indicum* is sparingly cultivated. 137

The Verbenaceæ afford, among many others, the valuable Milla (*Vitex altissima*), which is generally plentiful. I am inclined to doubt if var. *alata* can be sustained, as I repeatedly obtained examples of "broadly-winged" petiolated leaves on the same tree that bore normally petiolated leaves. This "winging" of the leaf stalk appears to be a matter of maturity, as in very young shoots the "wings" are often markedly pronounced. *V. leucoxylon* is common about tanks. *Gmelina asiatica* is moderately common in waste ground near habitations. *Premna tomentosa* and *P. serratifolia* are both abundant, the leaves of the latter being eaten. *Avicennia officinalis* is common in wet ground near the coast.

Passing to the Lauraceæ, the most useful is the well known "Ranai" (*Persea semecarpifolia*), fairly common in the forest areas, especially south of Kallu Obba and below Degalhola.

Of the Thymelæaceæ, I repeatedly obtained *Gyrinops walla*, its value as a cordage being known to the Sinhalese Veddas.

With a rapid glance at the Euphorbiaceæ and the Urticaceæ I must conclude my notes on the plants of the Vedda country:—

Euphorbia antiquorum is frequently to be met with, but it does not attain the proportions so marked in the Hambantota District.

E. tortilis, if I may accept a *4-winged* branch as indicating this species, I observed near Buddama.

E. tirucalli is common as a hedge plant, especially near the coast.

Bridelia retusa. Rather common.

Phyllanthus emblica. Occasional, more common towards Monaragala.

Fluggea leucopyrus. Very common in land that has been cleared.

Hemicyclia sepiaria. Exceedingly abundant. Its fruits are much relished by the Veddas, and, I might also add, by bears and monkeys. [262]

Mischodon zeylanicus occurs sparingly by the rivers, but is not generally distributed.

4: Lewis, N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

137 *Aleurites triloba* is to be found in a few village gardens towards the west, but is nowhere cultivated in much quantity. It is an introduction.

Dimorphocalyx glabellus. Exceedingly common, except near the sea shore.

Mallotus albus. Tolerably plentiful, especially in the west.

Macaranga tomentosa. Occasional. There is reason to suppose this has been to some extent introduced merely for the sake of the large peltate leaves, that afford a useful substitute for plates. By tracing a group of these trees I was able to find one of the most important of the caves on the east flank of "Westminster Abbey."

Chætocarpus castanocarpus. Occasional.

Sapium insigne. Common, especially near rocks.

Holoptelea integrifolia, representing the Urticaceæ, is very common up to within a short distance of the coast. It occurs right up the Kumbukkan valley to the foot of the Uva hills, after which it becomes scarce.

Trema orientalis I found to be locally plentiful, but more so towards the hills.

Streblus asper. Very common, and with much variation in the size of the leaf.

Ficus benghalensis (the Banyan of Europeans) is very abundant right down to the coast. It appears in all the old established villages, which leads one to the idea that it was introduced. I have, however, found it in localities where it may have been introduced by birds transporting the seed from the (?) cultivated trees, as the fruits are readily devoured by Barbets and Pigeons.

F. retusa. Very common.

F. arnottiana. Occasional, especially in rocky places.

F. tsjakela. Occasional, and appears to be singularly partial to old ruins.

F. hispida. Not uncommon near rivers and in damp forests.

F. religiosa. Common near any temple. At Kumuna I found some enormous examples, as also at Wattegama.

[824 292] *Antiaris toxicaria*. Rare. I am informed, as stated early in this Paper, that the Veddas use it for making "loin cloths" to be worn on ceremonial occasions.

4:Lewis N-5 (ca. 1906-1918) 1919
AX5 Vedda AX5

Artocarpus nobilis. Quite rare, and only seen up the Hedaoyá valley. 137

A. integrifolia. Cultivated, but not usually attaining any very large size, unless water is within reach.

A. incisa. At Buddama I was shown a solitary example of our well known Breadfruit tree, and I was informed that it was the only one of its kind to be found in the Vedda country. While this may not be strictly correct, I may mention that I found Breadfruit trees became exceedingly rare east of Monaragala.

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

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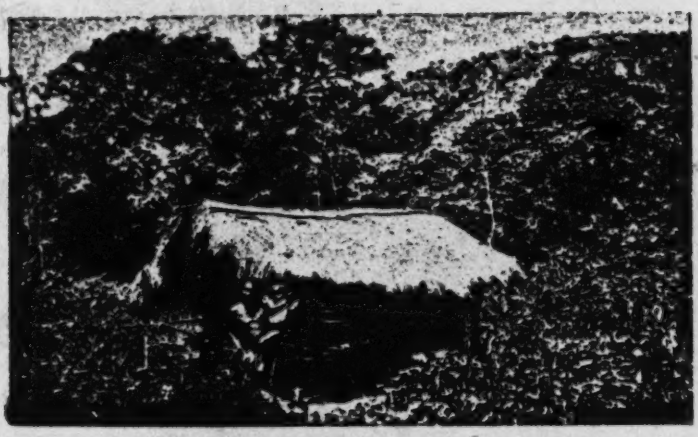

Poromola's lonely home

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Vedda bowman of Dambana

[facing p. vi]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

But the structure he pointed to was very unconvincing, being riddled with breaches. Familiarity not artifice, we concluded, inured the tobacco-growers of the Mahaweli; and we could not but admire a fortitude that braved annoyance so extreme and sickness so sure in the interests of a little gain.

The advice we received, however, we turned to future account; and the next night found us camped amid the trees close to the water's edge. thereby escaping mosquitoes, it is true, but not elephants; for about midnight we were awakened by the snapping of branches around us. With shouting and shooting we drove the intruders away, but not before our chauffeur, muddled with sleep and terrified out of his wits, had slipped over a rope and nearly drowned himself in the swollen river.

Traces of elephants were abundant everywhere. As early as four in the afternoon we would see one or more of them standing out in the tall grass by the river border plucking up great trunkfuls of the luscious food.

In the morning bird life was plentiful. Here were five pea-fowl perched on a half-immersed snag; there a lonely egret in a secluded pool. Imperial pigeons, pied horn-bills, and darters, their eel-necks inelegantly bent at bayonet-like angles, flew about in numbers. Racket-tailed drongoes and scimitar-babblers sang entrancingly; barbets contributed a monotonous refrain. White-necked storks were seated on dead trees with the abstraction of philosophers. Little munias carrying streamers of grass flew across from bank to bank. The nests of noisy bayas hung like fruit from favoured trees.

No less interesting were the trees that engirt us. The ubiquity of green was only occasionally relieved by some small flower of vivid hue. Many of the trees were creeper-laden and formed arbours that might have homed the troops of Pan. Great *kumbuks** bent to the water, making delightful retreats for forest-lovers. Often the river eddied round an islet formed around some stricken tree. Massive lianas, heavy as the hawsers of a Titan, swung from dizzy pinnacles holding in twisted grip the fragments of strangled saplings. Everywhere were stark dramas of vegetable life:—Tremendous trees in the grip of some epiphytic *ficus* whose tentacles guttered and clung in live pythonic cords and bands. Yet a few years and the parasite would clasp the crumbling carcase of its host and stand itself a forest monarch. Such sights are perhaps less poignant in their *denouement* than at the inception, when a slender cord, an elfin thing, streaks daintily some magnificent giant whose life, incredible as it may seem, it is destined one day surely to claim.

Nor was there lack of human interest here. A group of trees, their dome-shaped contours, suggesting at a distance masses of tree-covered rock, attracted us one noon to rest in their shade. Exotic *ingasaman* or 'rain-trees' they proved to be, sole monuments of a wasted human enterprise; not another sign was there to show that a score of years previously a young coconut plantation had struggled for existence here. Elephants had destroyed the last of the palms years ago.

A sylvan siesta is no smooth affair. Minute ticks swarm in the dry leaves and getting on to you bide their time. At some untoward moment, on the march perhaps or in the dead of night, an agonising pain as from the stab of a red-hot needle will tell you that Mr. Tick has begun to feed. A snake may fall on you, leap towards your face, and wriggle

*Terminalia glabra

We had hardly gained the base of the rock when we heard human voices and soon came up with three men and their dogs. One fellow carried a gun, the others had axes hitched to their shoulders. They were on their way to a devil dancing ceremony at a house of illness some miles away; but abandoning their project they accompanied us to their homes.

In a small clearing stood half a dozen leafy shelters. Outside one of these, three women with infants at the breast were seated roasting small yellow flowers. The rest of their people were at work on a *chena** close by. We summoned them and soon we had all the Veddas of the *Kosgaha Ulpotta* before us—some six or eight men and about a dozen women and children. They were a poor lot bearing the stigmata of malaria and framboesia. There was but one old man among them. The children were emaciated and languid.

Most of them showed strong traces of Tamil admixture, especially the women; what poor ornaments they wore, their clothing, and even their very names were Tamil; and so were their predilections if the coy smiles one or two of them bestowed on the fine Tamil that accompanied us signified anything. There were at least three men, however, true to Vedda type—short of stature, wild-eyed, with beardless face and upstanding frizzly hair.

They had no bows among them, except as playthings for the children, but made us one as a memento and stained it with charcoal and *thimbiri* to give it the appearance of use.

The huts were fashioned of wattle and leaves, and thatched with dry grass. Their domestic appointments comprised earthen pots, a wooden pestle and mortar, bark rope, and a deer skin or two.

Fruits, flowers, wild yams, honey, the flesh of animals, *kurrukhan*† and maize formed their food. The meat they fancied most was that of the langur and monitor lizard which they hunted with the lazy mongrels that loitered about. They eat abundantly and at any hour when food is plentiful; but as a rule one good meal a day is all they expect; in times of dearth they bear hunger stoically, chewing incessantly a few varieties of bark they carry in pouches fashioned of cloth saturated with melted wax (*itee rethee*). Partial nomads, they spend many months of the year under trees and in caves. Where the *palu*, *veera*, *kong*, or *mora*‡ fruit is ripe, where the hives are, there they take their women and children, dogs, and chattels and go.

"How often do you bathe?" I asked one of them, the smell of their ring-wormed bodies suggesting little acquaintance with water.

"What bathing for us," he replied. "We fall into a stream once in a way and get out again; that is our bath. And we only do that when our stomachs are full. When we are hungry we don't care for anything; we can eat even a man then!"

In answer to the question how they measured distances and what constituted a mile, the reply was, "We walk till our legs hurt, then we place our axes on the ground, sit down, take out our pouches, and chew a quid; that is our mile".

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*A patch of forest cleared for cultivation

†*Eleusine coracana*

‡*Minusops hexandra, Hemicyclia sepiaria, Schleichera trijuga, Nephelium longana,* respectively.

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A Vedda home of the Ulpotta. (Page 8)

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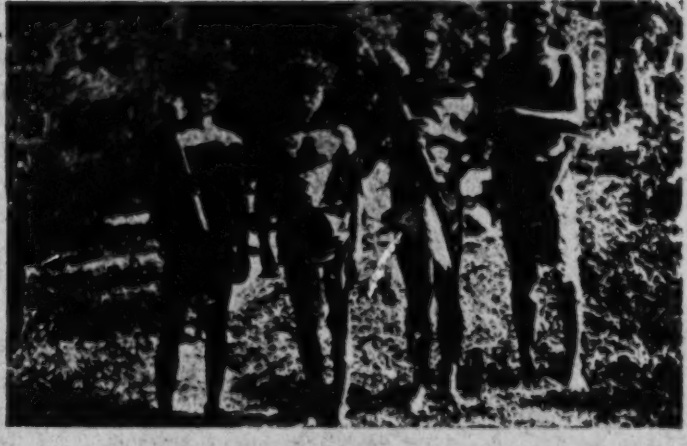

Veddas or Gunner's Quoin. The two to the left (Vela and Sinna) are the most typical. (Page 8)

[facing p. 8]

5: Spittel D-5 (ca. 1920) 1945 AX5 Vedda AX5

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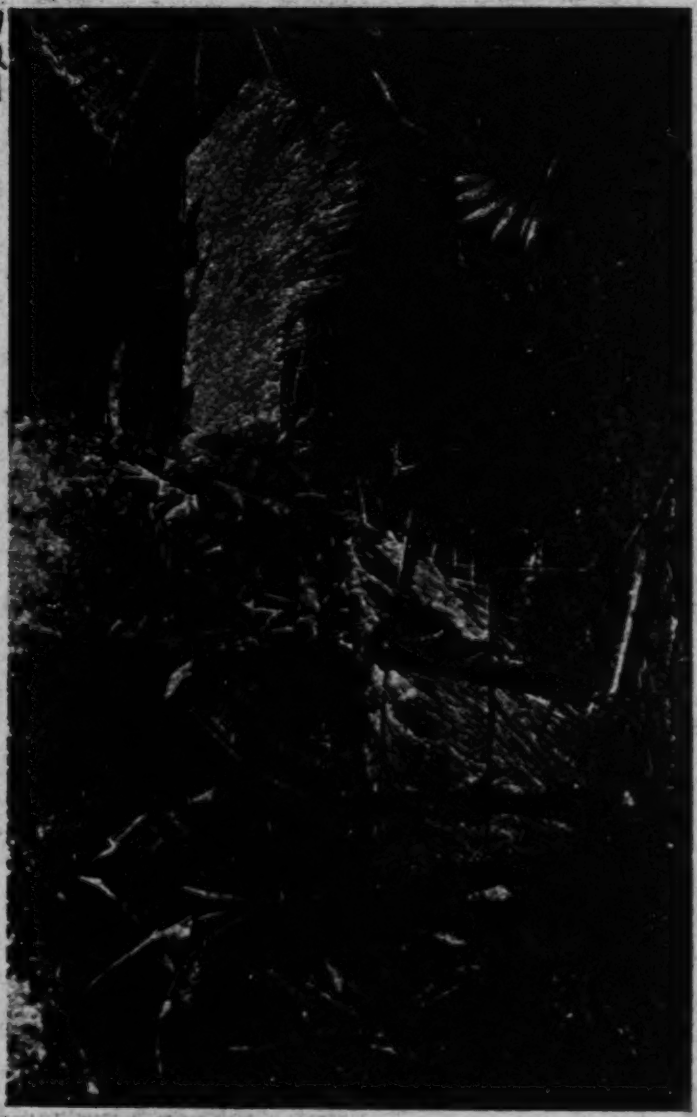


Deserted Bowls (Page 48)

[facing p. 48]

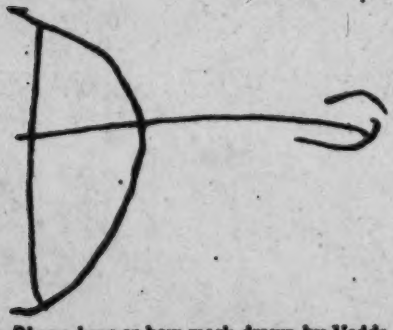
4. VEDDA JUNGLES

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them

ISAIAH.

THE forests we were now in were the immemorial haunts of the Veddas of Bingoda, Galmede and Sittala Wanniya. They stretched from Bingoda to Newaragala, and included such famous Vedda hills as Walimbe (Friar's Hood) and Bandaradua. The Magalavatan Aar cleaves this country on its way to Unichi tank. The jungle is virginal, but one is surprised to find here an occasional guava bearing luscious fruit, and much wild cinnamon. *Palu* and *vera*, so abundant in the more southern forests, is wanting here.

Nowhere is the Vedda more at home than in this wilderness, intersected by game trails only known to him and wild animals, and studded with the rocks that hold his caves. This land is all their wealth. By old Vedda law it is divided into *panguas* or shares, marked off by such natural landmarks as streams, rocks, or conspicuous trees scored with the *dhunu hena* (bow mark) distorted beyond recognition with age. The *panguas* of the Bingoda Veddas are six:—(1) Madana-gama: (2) Marana-pangua: (3) Kumburu-wella-gama (kuda and maha): (4) Bingoda: (5) Kakalana-bokke: (6) Bandaradua. Of these, the first three are included under the name Galmede and are now the property of Suthu Banda; the last three are Kaurala's. Each of these divisions, in days of greater prosperity, had its own chieftain.



Dhunu-hena or bow mark drawn by Vedda

It is to the credit of these Veddas that they alone of all the Veddas in Ceylon can still name their shares, indicate their boundaries, and observe the traditional law of non-transgression, hunting only in their allotted spheres. Suthu Banda, for instance, would not take the swiftlets' nests on Walimbe because they were Kaurala's by right; nor would he break the hives beyond Newaragala because those lands, once Vedda, have now lapsed to the Sinhalese.

Land goes to the eldest child whether son or daughter; failing them to the nephew. In the old days the proofs of inheritance were a white stone (*kirivanagala*) and molar tooth, bound together with a wisp of human hair; later the *ola* supplanted it; and still later a paper document issued by Government, and so carefully hidden away that it was invariably eaten by termites! These people, it would appear, were wiser than Government in their choice of a seizin.

[p. 79]

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

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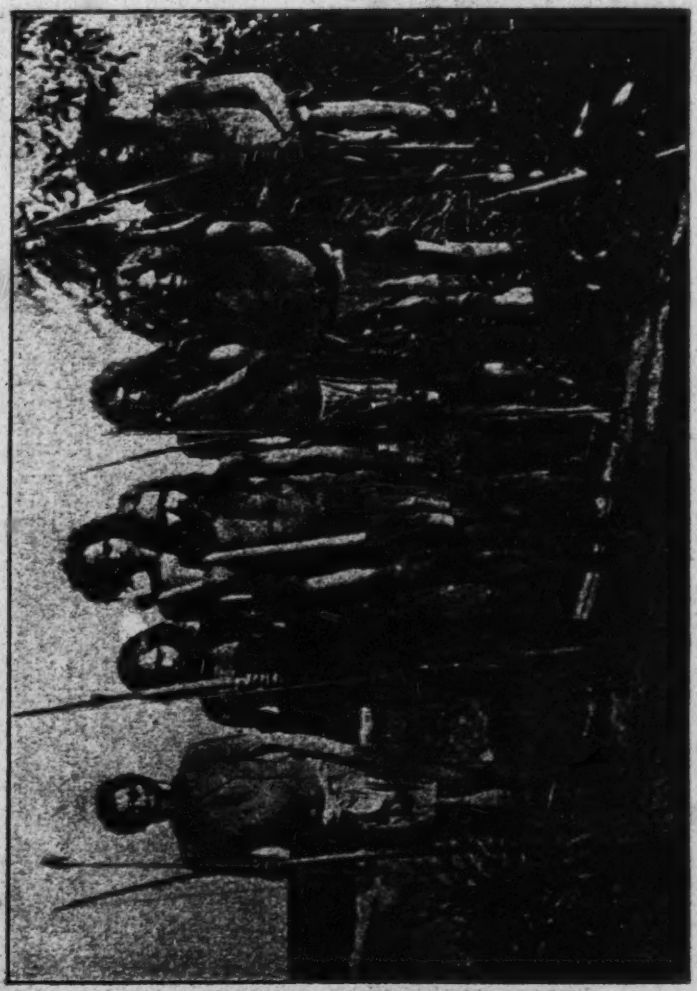

Photo R. Martin.

Fig. 16. Veddas from the Nilgala District (Ceylon)

18: Kleiweg de Zwaan E-5 (1906-1910) 1925 OB1 Indonesia
Vedda AX5

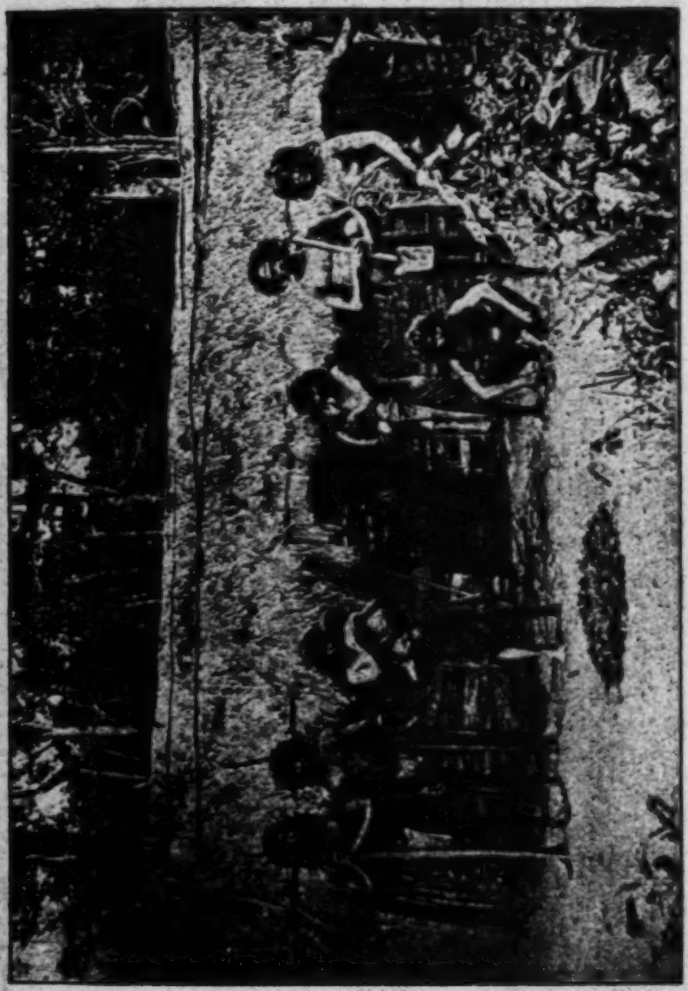

Photo Fr. Sarasin.

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Fig. 17. Veddas of the Nilgala Region